

Approved on 06.12.2012

Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee (WUDAC)

May 8th, 2012 Meeting Minutes
2424 Reddie Drive, Wheaton MD 20902

Members Present: Jeannette Feldner (Chair), Marian Fryer, William Moore, Janet Yu, Jim Onder, Linda Amendt, Henriot St. Gerard, Matt Barry, Ken Nelson

Members Absent: Devala Janardan

Staff Present: Ana Lopez van Balen, Director, Mid-County Regional Center
Sidney Cooper, Marketing and Communications Director
Peter McGinnity, Wheaton Redevelopment Manager

Guests: Adam Fogel, Staff to Councilmember Navarro
Tiffany Ward, Staff to Councilmember Elrich
Esther French, Wheaton Patch
Aaron Kraut, The Gazette
Larry Silverman, Abigail Adebe, Donna Savage, Howard Hussbaum from the Kensington Heights Civic Association

Call to Order: Chair Jeannette Feldner, 5:05pm

Motions: Minutes approved with corrections. Rob submitted written report. Mr. Nelson made a motion to approve minutes, Mr. Barry seconded the motion.

Police Report: Sgt. Currie reported that enforcement continues in the CBD especially around the nightclubs in Wheaton. Their efforts have helped to reduce crime associated with clients visiting those establishments. Other than that, crime is low.

Community Concerns: Donna Savage from the Kensington Heights Civic Association came to speak on their civic association's concerns regarding the Costco mega gas station. They submitted a number of documents for review and focused on the following points: people are going to come from far away to get cheap gas; air quality will decrease for their community by the idle cars waiting to fill their cars, which is why they are recommending that the gas station be placed in a location with a buffer; state that Costco reports are not correct, and their consultant will create a report by the 10th speaking to the deficiencies of Costco's environmental reports; lastly, having a mega gas station does not fit in accord with smart growth principles.

WUDAC members expressed concerns with several of their concerns. Ms. Amendt stated that she didn't see the connection with Metro. KHCA responded that the location of the gas station is connection by locals to the Metro. Ms. Yu stated she had personal/individual reasons for being opposed as she felt that what they were asking was not reasonable and they need to take consideration of residents. Some community members responded saying they were frustrated with the process and asked for support.

Mr. Onder stated that Wheaton is a convergence of roads. He asked how low can Costco price their gas? KHCA stated that they did a comparison and stated that on average, Costco's gas was about 2 cents lower than most. WaWa was lower in some areas.

Report from Council:

Tiffany Ward from Councilmember Elrich's office shared information on the ZTA 12-07 that would limit mega gas stations from being 1000ft from public facilities. She stated that there are 5 cosponsors and that the public hearing will take place on June 19th. WUDAC agreed to wait until the public hearing to review information and make a recommendation

Adam Fogel from Councilmember Navarro's office spoke on the changes to the rates in the Parking Lot District. Rates will change to a tiered system, parking will increase to 60cents/hr and 75 cents for short term. Long-term will increase to \$113/month. Collection times will not be extended.

Mr. Fogel also spoke regarding the Wheaton Public Safety Task Force that Councilmember Navarro and Riemer have requested in response to concerns raised during the redevelopment conversations in Wheaton. He also spoke to the Council committee on Wheaton that was being created to monitor implementation of development in Wheaton. Ms. Amendt asked if members of community would be involved. Mr. Fogel informed the committee that only council would be involved in this effort.

RSC Director Report: Ms. Van Balen spoke to issues pertaining to predatory towing in Wheaton and the support trying to be raised on enforcement through Congressman Van Hollen's office. She also mentioned that the EMS bill was reintroduced by the County Executive due to the changing economic reality the county was facing especially with the changes in Annapolis. The Mid-County Citizen's Advisory Board voted to support it, as did the Washington Post, the Gazette and many other civic groups. The Youth Advisory Committee for Mid-County will be working to enhance the World of Montgomery Festival—this is a great group to turn to for ideas in the future. Lastly, the farmers market started on Sundays and is off to a great start.

Subcommittee Reports: The Communications subcommittee asked for members to review the communication plan submitted at the last meeting. The Community Building subcommittee discussed plans to staff the table at the Taste of Wheaton. They also completed efforts with the community distribution list and will be dissolving group to join the Communications subcommittee. The other subcommittees did not meet.

Redevelopment Report: Peter McGinnity submitted a written report. He also mentioned that Safeway is ahead of schedule due to the mild winter.

Westfield Report: Mr. Barry reported that Costco is ahead of schedule as well and expect to open in the October. They have increased sales to 14.1 million and are excited to report the following new businesses at the mall: G by Guess, Pottery & More, Relax Station, Monster Auto, Bubble tea. Coming Soon: Costco, Dicks Sporting Goods, Salon Plaza. Their new tagline is "it's all here."

Other Business: Ms. Feldner mentioned that everyone should be at the Taste of Wheaton. She also disseminated the CERB report created for WUDAC. Lastly, she mentioned accepting that changes that have come to Wheaton and possibly inviting Parks and Planning to our next meeting, as they will be

part of the Wheaton community. Lastly, Ms. Van Balen mentioned creating a joint memo with council sharing with the community what we have coming to Wheaton in the future.

Meeting Adjourned: 6:30pm